

**Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Proposal to Reduce Wolf Numbers
In the
Lolo Elk Management Zone**

Analysis of Public Comments

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Background

Gray wolves (*Canis lupus*) were reintroduced into Idaho in 1995 and listed as an experimental nonessential population under Section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Thirty-five wolves were reintroduced and by 2005, an estimated 600 wolves (61 packs and 36 breeding pairs) were well distributed from the Panhandle to southeast Idaho. In February 2005, the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) modified the 10(j) rule which details State options for management of wolves impacting domestic livestock and wild ungulates.

The provisions of the 10(j) rule fall do not allow the state's preferred management tool of regulated hunting. However, under Section (v):

“If gray wolf predation is having an unacceptable impact on wild ungulate populations (deer, elk, moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, antelope, or bison) as determined by the respective State and Tribe (on reservations), the State or Tribe may lethally remove wolves in question. In order for the provision to apply, the States or Tribes must prepare a science-based document that: (1) describes what data indicate that ungulate herd is below management objectives, what data indicate there are impacts by wolf predation on the ungulate population, why wolf removal is a warranted solution to help restore the ungulate herd to State or Tribal management objectives, the level and duration of wolf removal being proposed, and how ungulate population response to wolf removal will be measured; (2) identifies possible remedies or conservation measures in addition to wolf removal; and (3) provides an opportunity for peer review and public comment on their proposal prior to submitting it to the Service for written concurrence.”

Idaho's Department of Fish and Game is now proposing to reduce the wolf population in the Lolo Zone by up to 75% (no more than 43 wolves) of the current mid-point wolf population estimate (58) during year one, and maintain the population at 25-40% of pre-removal wolf abundance for 5 years. Concurrently, the Department will monitor elk and wolf populations. After 5 years, results will be analyzed and a peer-reviewed manuscript will be published evaluating the effect of wolf removal on elk population dynamics.

On January 23, 2006, the Department released to the public the science-based document that would support their proposal for lethal control of no more than 43 wolves in the

Upper Lochsa drainage of the Clearwater National Forest. The release of that document initiated an opportunity for public comment that lasted through February 17, 2006. In addition to public meetings held in Boise (Feb. 2) and Lewiston (Feb. 7), the Department received written and emailed comments. This report summarizes those comments and their content as additional information upon which the Fish and Game Commission may make a final decision on the proposal.

Methodology

The Department's proposal generated an unusually large number of comments, 42,419 in total. Of this number, approximately 680 were emailed to the Department, presented orally in the two public meetings, or sent to the Department through regular mail. In addition, approximately 41,569 comments, primarily sent via email, were apparently the result of a mass effort initiated by the Defenders of Wildlife, and were substantially identical¹. Of this amount, 2,989 were identified as having been sent beyond the limit of the comment period, leaving a total of 38,580 valid comments.

The objective of seeking public comments for a management action such as that proposed by the Department might be viewed as twofold: (1) look for additional knowledge that would strengthen the proposal or cause its modification and, (2) measure public sentiment for or against the proposal and identify groups or numbers of individuals who hold various points of view. In addition, public comments can offer insights on the level of public understanding regarding the issue at hand. Such insights help strengthen communications and educational efforts designed to promote better understanding of the need and rationale for future agency actions.

For this proposal, the public comments were unstructured, with each commenter free to offer opinions, suggest alternatives, be anonymously threatening or emotional, raise additional issues or otherwise stray from the proposal per se. As opposed to a formal questionnaire through which it is relatively easy to sum the responses to each question, unstructured public comments pose analytical challenges. Generally, however, the comments reflected several general themes around which the comments either for or against the proposal can be grouped. These themes and some generalized comments indicative of them include:

Spiritually motivated beliefs or strongly held personal values ("For me, elk hunting is a spiritual quest for which I have a right" or "What gives us the right to harm one of God's creatures?"),

Ecological balance concerns ("Wolves and elk have coexisted in a balanced relationship for eons" or "We have introduced a very efficient predator into a system where it has not existed for many years and elk cannot compete with them"),

¹ In any summary of this much data to be summarized within a short time frame, there will be some room for error in the tabulations, due primarily to duplicate comments and multiple ways in which comments can be made.

Scientific issues and trust of professional managers (“The Department’s study is too short, too small and reaches invalid conclusions” or “The Department did its job—it completed a valid study and is now making a decision based upon that science”),

Economic issues (“We’re losing our hunting opportunities and the economic value they bring to rural communities” or “Idaho will see many more tourists who will come here to see or hear wolves than will ever hunt”),

Habitat (“Poor habitat can no longer support the Department’s elk goal—we need to restore it”) (a concern shared by both those for or against the proposal),

Anti-hunting, anti-wolf or equality of species opinions (“Why not simply restrict hunting?” or “We knew wolf reintroduction was a mistake and if we want elk we need to get rid of wolves” or “Why should humans decide one species is more desirable than another?”)

Concerns over safety or property (“I worry about my kids and horses in the backcountry” or “People have this unfounded ‘Red Riding Hood’ fear of wolves”), and,

General support or opposition to the proposal (“I support the proposal” or “The Department is taking necessary steps” or “This is nothing more than Idaho politics at work—the hunting, agriculture and livestock industries all hate wolves”)

There were also comments that, while repetitive, were not so numerous as to suggest additional themes. They included concerns over Tribal hunting practices and harvests, suggestions that “surplus” wolves be located to other parts of the state or even to other states, threats to boycott the state and its products (numerous “potato” references) and numbers of “hunting stories” wherein the commenter related recent experiences from which they typically concluded that wolves were impacting big game herds, sometimes with the admonition that until the matter was corrected, they would hunt elsewhere.

In order to develop the themes that arose from the comments, it was necessary to read a significant number of them before actually “tallying” the content of any of the comments. Once this was completed, we then developed a spreadsheet that divided comments into one of three general categories—generally opposing the proposal, generally favoring the proposal and “undecided”. In order to fall into either the “oppose” or “favor” categories, commenters would have clearly indicated their position. The only commenters assigned to the “undecided” category were those who either said they were undecided or who failed to indicate a position generally favoring or opposing the concept. Only 30 commenters fell into the “undecided” category. All the comments were read, with the exception of the over 38,000 comments generated by Defenders of Wildlife. Those were sampled to determine their general consistency and to find any comments not generated by that effort that might have been buried in the large number of Defender’s comments.

Few limited their comments to a single issue. Most offered several opinions, raised questions or offered suggestions. Within each of these two larger general categories,

there were columns in which specific concerns, suggestions or opinions within each individual comment could be tallied. For the “against” category, specific issues included: value or spiritual, ecological balance, science, distrust professionals, anti-hunting, economic, equality of species, habitat and general opposition. Within the “for” category were: loss/value of hunting, ecological balance, science, value or spiritual, trust professionals, anti-wolf, public safety or property and general support. The “undecided” category (with only a few comments) raised science questions or issues regarding the level of support for professionals, among others.

Some subjective judgments needed to be made to tally comments into the proper issue columns. Generally, the overall tone and theme of each comment indicated the first entry into a column. For example, several sentences that described how the habitat had changed over the years and the relationship of habitat to realistic elk management goals would rate a check in the “habitat” column. An additional, but perhaps shorter opinion that it was wrong to assign a greater “value” to an elk than a wolf would rate a check in the “equality of species column”. If a commenter “for” the proposal discussed their experiences with finding wolf-killed elk, not seeing elk where there were previously many, or otherwise worried that wolves were disrupting what the commenter believed to be a balanced ecosystem, then that warranted a check in the “ecological balance” column. A further comment that indicated a fear for life or livestock created a check in the “safety” column. The majority of comments included sufficient substance to warrant at least two entries into “issue” columns. Those who limited their comments to a simple unsupported statement, i.e., “Stop using wolves as a scapegoat for failure to manage habitat” or “If we don’t control wolves, our kids will never be able to hunt” rated a check in the “general opposition” or “general support” columns.

Appendix 1 includes the spreadsheet that tabulates the individual comments. Different interpretations of individual comments might result in assigning opinions into other columns and there is arguably some overlap between the columns. For these reasons, the opinion columns should be viewed as more specific concerns arising from the commenter’s broader position that defined whether they were “for the proposal” or “against the proposal”. For those two categories, there is little doubt about in which each comment belongs.

In addition to the comments from individuals, twenty-two organizations with members in Idaho prepared written comments, including the Office of the Governor and the Nez Perce Tribe. Most of these represented thoughtful, comprehensive comments even though they may have been repetitive of many of the comments from individuals. These organizations, along with a very brief synopsis of their concerns are as follows:

1. The Wilderness Society (Oppose)—Concern over habitat and support for the recommendations of the Clearwater Elk Collaborative. Additional concerns over the structure and conclusions of IdF&G’s scientific basis for the proposal.
2. Concerned Sportsmen of Idaho (Support)—Suggests reducing wolf numbers to validate and complete the Department’s study.

3. Idaho Wildlife Federation (Support)—Believes a comprehensive strategy, including wolf reduction and habitat improvements is needed to solve this long term problem.
4. Wolf Education and Research Center (Oppose)—Proposal is a product of Idaho’s political structure. Disagrees with the Department’s scientific basis and urges habitat improvements.
5. Friends of the Clearwater (Oppose)—Disagrees with Department’s scientific basis and notes the “ephemeral” nature of habitat, given the infrequency of stand-replacing fires.
6. Idaho Anti-Wolf Coalition (Support)—Raises questions over the permanency of the 10(j) rule. Questions the validity of “endangered” status for wolves and urges their removal from the state.
7. Office of the Governor (Support)—Recognizes that the proposal is part of a multifaceted effort that include habitat improvements. Emphasizes that the proposal will not retard wolf recovery, given the large number of animals in the state.
8. Selkirk Conservation Alliance and Alliance for the Wild Rockies (Oppose)—The Department’s scientific basis does not justify removing 75% of the wolves in the area. Raises very specific concerns with the scientific study.
9. Idaho Conservation League (Oppose)—Questions whether wolf recovery goals have actually been met. Questions the conclusions of the scientific study and offers specific suggestions for improving it.
10. Humane Society of the United States (Oppose)—Questions the conclusions of the Department’s scientific study. Urges an “ecosystem approach” to wildlife management and suggests that implementation of the proposal would violate the ESA and other laws.
11. Conservation Northwest (Oppose)—Disagrees with the Department’s conclusions through its scientific study and offers suggestions for improvements. Suggests that the proposed action will violate the ESA.
12. Great Burn Study Group (Undecided)—Believes the Department’s study lacks credibility and fails to support the conclusion that reducing wolves will increase elk numbers without additional data.
13. Boulder-White Clouds Council (Oppose)—The data from the study does not support the conclusion that wolf numbers should be reduced. Cites F&G comments that speak to increased hunter success in recent years.

14. Predator Conservation Alliance and American Wildlands (Oppose)—Believes the proposal would be judged illegal and is contrary to public opinion. Disagrees with the conclusions of the Department’s scientific study.
15. National Wildlife Federation (Oppose)—Concludes that the data does not support removal of wolves to increase elk numbers and raises a number of specific concerns with the Department’s study.
16. Defenders of Wildlife (Oppose)—Concludes that habitat is a limiting factor for elk. Raises significant issues with the science document, including gaps in the data, incorrect assumptions and poor research design. Notes basic problems with the state’s wolf management plan.
17. Nez Perce Tribe (Oppose)—Suggests the control action is premature, given the pending delisting decision. The costs of the proposal may compete with funds for other needed wolf management work. Raises NEPA compliance concerns and the possible reduction in Tribal harvests.
18. Western Watersheds Project (Oppose)—Fears that politics will drive a pre-determined decision to move ahead with the proposal by the Commission. Cites concerns with the science document and supports the comments of Defenders of Wildlife in this regard. Questions whether current habitat can support the Department’s elk goals for the Lolo area.
19. Wolf Recovery Foundation (Oppose)—Believes that the sample size of study is too small. Most declines in elk numbers due to habitat changes. Suggests continuing the study and increasing sample size and comparing units 10, 12 with others in the state.
20. Wildlands CRP (Oppose)—Believes that habitat changes is the problem with elk numbers and advocates a balance between wolves, elk and habitat.
21. Idaho Cattle Association (Support)—Suggests that controlling wolf numbers to increase elk will also forestall future wolf/livestock problems and increase confidence in the state’s wolf management program. Supports monitoring and an in-depth analysis of the project.
22. Bonner-Boundary Cattle Association (Support)—Believes that wolves have exceeded recovery goals and that reductions will help restore elk and prevent livestock deprecations.

The Results

The opportunity for public comment resulted in approximately 680 individuals (excluding, for the moment, the Defender’s campaign) who expressed 828 concerns,

opinions or perhaps offered suggestions. Another 30 commenters were apparently undecided in their support of the proposal. Of those 828 concerns, comment or suggestions, 560 tended to be in opposition to the proposal, while 268 favored it, a ratio of just over two opposing opinions for every one in support. If only the number of commenters is considered as opposed to the number of opinions, issues or suggestions that each raised, then the raw numbers are 421 opposing to 229 in favor, a ratio of 1.8:1.

As noted previously, The Defenders of Wildlife apparently mounted a highly successful campaign to solicit email comments from all across the country and several foreign countries. The vast majority of these comments either repeated verbatim a letter or made slight, non-substantive changes to it before submitting it. The basic provisions of this letter are as follows:

Dear Director Huffaker,

I'm writing to oppose the Idaho Department of Fish and Game's plan to kill wolves in the Lolo elk management zone of the Clearwater Region.

Your agency's study has failed to provide evidence that wolves are a primary factor in elk population decline or failure to rebound from low population levels. For example, there is indeed a strong connection between wolves and elk in Idaho, but statewide research clearly shows that greater numbers of elk support more wolves, not that lots of wolves depress elk numbers. According to the scientific evidence, the decline in elk population actually began occurring before wolves were reintroduced to Idaho. Even the plan's expert peer reviewers note that the study is built on weak assumptions and that the elk decline is a result of habitat conditions. Similar declines in elk numbers or in elk reproduction have occurred within Idaho and neighboring states in areas without wolves. Elsewhere in the northern Rockies, impact of wolves on elk has been found to be less important than climate, range conditions, and even human harvest.

Poor habitat conditions, as those documented in the Clearwater National Forest, appear to make it impossible for the state to currently meet the current elk population objectives in this area. Those objectives should be lowered to better reflect the current habitat conditions.

The study of wolves' impact on elk populations is a good idea, but should be continued until there is enough reliable data to draw conclusions as to how elk die. Eight radio collared cow elk killed by wolves out of a total sample of 25 dead elk is just too small a sample to draw any statistical conclusions.

Politics, not biology, is driving this wolf-killing proposal demonstrating a significant problem with the Idaho state wolf management plan itself. I vigorously oppose Idaho Fish and Game's current proposal to eliminate wolves for five years in the region and hope that Idaho Fish and Game will instead demonstrate the agency's ability to conserve wolves, not simply kill them.

Obviously, the letter raises several important points and opinions for the Commission to consider. Apart from the substance of the letter and the thousands that are either identical or obvious derivations of it, there is the overriding question of whether the letter

represents over 38,000 separate but shared opinions or the opinion of one organization expressed roughly 38,000 times. Either way, the sheer volume of the responses, original or not, is impressive.

The Defender's campaign raises questions over whether or how to weight individual comments. For example, it may be tempting to attempt to determine the number of in-state comments versus those generated from outside the state. Such a temptation seems based on the premise that those who reside in Idaho should have greater weight given to their comments than to those from outside the state. It must be noted that it is difficult or in many cases impossible to determine the source of emailed comments, particularly. Unless the sender chose to disclose their state or residence (as many did) or the "internet post office" name offers some clue as to its location, it is not feasible to determine the state or country of origin. Also, it should be noted that comments on the proposal that were clearly from out of state were not all in opposition. Many hunters and others from outside the state supported the Department's proposal. There is also the matter of the credentials or background of the individual commenter. For example, a number made clear their various scientific training or their long experience in hunting in the Lolo area. It is up to the Commission to decide whether to give any of the comments more weight as part of their ultimate decision.

Conclusions

Wolves and wolf management are undeniably controversial. At first glance, there would seem to be two general camps—those who support wolves and would oppose any reduction in their numbers and those who opposed their reintroduction and now support removal of them by any means. The comments, however, reveal a greater complexity of beliefs. While both camps are clearly identifiable, each raises questions about the role of wolves in the ecosystem, "balance" within nature, habitat needs of elk, and political expediency versus scientifically based decision making that illustrates a deeper understanding of the issues than would be indicated by a simple "for" or "against" vote.

Perhaps less surprising is that the comments underscored both the increasingly polarized nature of natural resource management and the changing public perceptions about these issues. Within a short time ago, wolves were not an issue in Idaho and how the state chose to manage its wildlife resources was clearly perceived as a state matter. Both the reintroduction of wolves to the state and the controversy that has now surrounded how to manage them is likely to be the hallmark of the issues facing the Department and the Commission in the future.

Table 1. Summary of Representative Comments Either Opposing or Supporting the Proposal

Theme	Opinions and Comments Tending to Oppose Proposal	Number/% of Total	Opinions and Comments Tending to Favor Proposal	Number/% of Total Opinions
Spiritually motivated beliefs or strongly held personal values	I don't condone the killing of any animal unless it is vital for the persons survival and everything is used from the animal. I also feel that when that animal is sacrificed for the person/family, the hunter should thank them for their gift so the family could indeed survive because of them.	54/9.6%	As a resident for thirty (30) years of the state of Idaho, demand that my rights to have healthy game herds and the opportunity hunt and bag these game animals be up held. I don;t want out of state influence controlling my rights. I don't want a judge from federal court or of some other state making laws that do not reflect the wishes of the majority of the residents of the state of Idaho	10/3.7%
	The sooner we learn not to interfere with nature the sooner we will be able to stop destroying our environment and the planet we live in-the only one where we can do this at present time-and with us all the creatures populating this planet. We don't have the right to take them with us in our run for greed and death!		My dad and his dad eradicated the original animals because they did not fit in with the expansion and uses of man. ... Please put poor old common sense back into the management of what the old timers tried to do with our natural resources.	
Ecological Balance	If you must remove some start at 25% and work your way up. The longer the elk population is down the stronger the herds in the Lolo zone will be when they return to the natural balance.	87/15.5%	I was happy to see the wolf reintroduced into the lower 48 and hoped the gov. would control them as they control other top predators. Unfortunately this did not happen, the elk and moose in some areas are devastated.	43/16.0%
	Wolves will be preying on what they can catch, which is generally the very young, old or sickly. Now, human hunters (which this is really what it's all about anyway, right?) don't usually go for the sickly, runty members of species, do they		A readily available, plentiful and unconditioned food source has allowed the wolf population to grow exponentially in this region.	
	When the predator is eliminated from an eco-system, such as the wolf was for so many years, the balance is impacted. Prey species will breed unchecked, with weaker members of the herd perhaps living and producing inferior bloodlines.		Controlled thinning of our forests helps improve habitat for elk, deer, and moose. Controlled hunting of wolves will improve the elk populations and overall wildlife community.	
	I would urge you to reevaluate your conclusions and look to the total health and resiliency of the ecosystem in general rather than focusing on elk populations. I think you will find that the return of healthy riparian areas, healthy fish, healthy beavers, and diversity of bird life will reap even greater recreational rewards than the slight increase in elk population that might occur.		The bottom line is that yes, the need to control wolves is just as necessary now as other plants/animals. Therefore, though my sympathy lies with the wolf, Idaho need to reduce these numbers.	

Theme	Opinions and Comments Tending to Oppose Proposal	Number/% of Total Opinions	Opinions and Comments Tending to Favor Proposal	Number/% of Total Opinions
Scientific Issues and Trust of Professionals	I would like to know <u>exactly and in detail</u> how elk population management "goals" were established. How was the baseline population established and what years were used for this determination?	144/25.7%	I trust the conclusions reached by the department. This is the only way that wolves are going to be part of the landscape. To limit their numbers to carrying capacity, just like any other animal, is better for their long term survival.	63/23.5%
	The correlation of declining elk populations with wolf introduction by merely putting points on a graph (Figures 1-3) does not constitute a significant result; analysis of other factors involved, including increasing limitation of range due to brush fields that have succeed into forest, are not evaluated or plotted.		I have read the proposal carefully and concur with the scientific formulas utilized as well as the control effort. I have read considerable wolf research and am very impressed that the numbers and percentages used to extrapolate the number of wolves necessary to remove parallel exactly that research.	
	My problem with this proposal is it does not state (that I can find) what the term unacceptable impact means. Does it mean that the wolves are not allowed to kill a single wildlife animal to eat? Are they not entitled to feed their young? What does <u>unacceptable mean</u> ? Does it mean that there are not enough elk to hunt? Or, does it mean that there are not enough elk here to draw out-of-state hunters?		This wildlife proposal is as scientific as it gets when dealing with wildlife and wildlife populations. We know we have good data on the elk populations in the Lolo Zone. Sportsmen have watched while a great and marvelous elk herd has been reduced to a pitiful level of what it once was. The decline has been attributed to a combination of effects. There are currently tremendous efforts astride to curb losses and improve opportunities for the herd. We stopped the dramatic decline until the additive, unmanaged effects of wolves.	
	By your own admission, elk populations have been in decline for much longer than wolves have been back in Idaho. The challenge, therefore, is not to pin the blame on wolves before we understand thoroughly what has really caused these population declines.			

Theme	Opinions and Comments Tending to Oppose Proposal	Number/% of Total Opinions	Opinions and Comments Tending to Favor Proposal	Number/% of Total Opinions
Habitat	I would like to add my voice to those who oppose the killing of wolves, cougars, and bears simply to try to build elk herds that aren't going to recover to the previous levels anyway due to the widespread changes in habitat.	64/11.4%	From the CEI initiative, to the BHROWS activity, to the Crapo Elk Summit meetings etc, there seems to be lots of assessment, evaluation, and recommendation, but very little activity on the ground, in the field. Actual, Real, Progress towards habitat improvement and expansion seems woefully, well, minimal.	Counted with "Ecological Balance" Theme
	I don't think that the decline of elk in the Lolo area is strictly due to the introduction of wolves, its because of the loss of elk habitat. There has not been any regular disturbances in the area from primarily fire which has lead to the decline in numbers. I think that the control of wolves is a band- ade for the real problem. We need more fire or timber sales.		We recognize that habitat must be addressed and have supported the Clearwater Elk Initiative and other efforts to improve the habitat in which Idaho's ungulate's population depend.	
Anti-Hunting or Anti-Wolf	IF the verdict is to kill the wolves, maybe you could kill less of the pack OR relocate some of the pack to another area. OR dont allow hunting by humans in that area of the state (Of course, quite a few TROPHY elk are killed in that area, so I doubt THAT will be an acceptable solution). I think it is possible to SHARE the ELK with the wolves.	19/3.4%	In a nutshell, Please GET RID OF THE DAMN WOLVES!!!!!!!!!!!!!!	32/11.9%
	You cannot allow red-neck hunters to allow superstitious fears and local legends abuse an animal population by passing simple-minded laws simply because you lack accurate information and guidance for a real and realistic conservation effort to redistribute a wolf population (or any other predatory population). These animals have the same right to exist as we do.		Being a hunter I would like to see all the wolves gone . If the easterners want wolves , then give them wolves!!	
	Your focus should be on wildlife habitat to preserve the native biodiversity of the region and not to provide more Elk and Deer for human hunting. It is so obvious that your agency caters to hunters and anglers at the expense of those who enjoy wildlife viewing and have a wholistic appreciation for biodiversity in all it's forms.		I'm not sure why we lost the battle on wolfs in the first place. I myself and most hunters I know didn't want them to begin with. I feel the federal gov. is out of line forcing the issue.	
	Why not ban hunters from Elk hunting for a set number of years to see the outcome of that? Surely, there must be other alternatives than the proposal in front of you.		Elk, deer, antelope, sheep, and goats (basically all big game) are much more important to the Big Game sportsman and Idaho's economy than the Canadian Timber Wolf. Furthermore, and given the option, I would remove all wolves from Idaho immediately.	
	I cannot believe that you would even consider the killing of Wolves' in the name of Elk Hunters. Is it more important to see Wildlife in their natural habitat, or hear and see hunters blasting Elks for their machoism?		One other issue that I would like to address and feel that the state NEEDS to address, is the impact of tribal hunting along highway 12. Using your figures stated in the proposal, the tribe has harvested between 25-75 cow elk per year. That far exceeds the impact of the wolves at this point.	

Theme	Opinions and Comments Tending to Oppose Proposal	Number/% of Total Opinions	Opinions and Comments Tending to Favor Proposal	Number/% of Total Opinions
Concerns Over Property or Safety		0/0%	What infuriates me is that there were 4 wolves within 200 yards of where my children were playing. Its just a matter of time before we have an attack on a human.	12/4.5%
			I used to go to the mountains and enjoy walks through the hills - I don't go now unless I'm carrying protection. One day soon, this state will see a person killed by a pack	
			We lost one horse in 2004 to the wolves.	
General Opposition or Support	What we currently have in Idaho is Little-Red-Riding-Hood wolf hysteria and a group of cowardly politicians and wildlife managers who are afraid to stand up to that hysteria.	126/22.5%	I fully and completely support the removal of wolves on and in the Lolo zone. My only concern is that you are not removing enough animals.	53/19.8%
	I knew this would happen as soon as the government turned over wolf management to the state of Idaho. The people that want to mass murder the wolves again were just waiting for this moment.		I would rather see a draw hunt on a wolf instead of seeing Fish and Game go in and kill off the wolves just to get them out of an area.	
	I really don't understand how animals can survive if you kill 75% of them ~ and what for? Are they pests? Are they over populated? Are they killing people? Are they eating the food of other animals? Sounds mighty sick to me, sir.		...any reduction in the Wolf population will be seen as a step in the right direction. Let me know when I can buy a Wolf tag and come to Idaho and spend my money in those small town that are so dependent on hunters for income.	
Economic Issues	My husband and I are purchasing property in Idaho wolf county expressly to offer visitors a chance to see or hear wolves. This is the future of Idaho wildlife interests.	16/2.9%	the economic impact on this state would be catastrophic. People come from all over North America to hunt our abundant herds of deer and elk. Those people would gladly spend their money elsewhere if they don't have a reasonable opportunity to harvest a elk or deer here.	53/19.8%
	Your Policy on Wolves and Bears are such that if implemented will cause me to personally boycott all products,from Idaho,Boycott all tourism in your state and encourage every one among my family and friends to do the same.		The Forest Road 250 , I never saw a single outfitter or guide in seven days, no traffic on the road means no money spent on gas, food, groceries, the guides and outfitters are not even soliciting customers because they are embarrassed to charge them for a hunting trip when they know there is no game!	
Equality of Species	And,in any event,why should state tax payer's money be used to kill off one species in order for a small group of hunters to be able to kill another species for fun?	50/8.9%	None expressed	0/0.0%